



PASTORAL LETTER

Of His Lordship, the Bishop of Exeter, on the occasion of the Jubilee granted by His Holiness,

POPE PIUS IX, ON THE 1st DAY OF AUGUST, A. D., 1854.

JOSEPH EUGENIUS GUIGUES, by the Grace of God and the favor of the Holy Catholic See, Bishop of Exeter.

TO THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF OUR DIOCESE, HEALTH AND BENEDICTION IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

MOST DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN.

But a few years have elapsed since We proclaimed a solemn Jubilee, granted to the whole world by our Holy Father, the present Pope, and we again have to announce to you that the treasures of the Church are re-opened in your behalf. The Sovereign Pontiff commissions us to make known to you that he grants to all the Faithful a new and extraordinary grace in the form of a Jubilee. Let us receive it with gratitude, and let us not be surprised in finding these special graces so abundantly multiplied in our day. Is it not just that the Pontiff's heart, tender as that of a mother, vast as the entire world, which it comprehends in its paternal solicitude, exalted as Heaven, of which he is the confident, should call for Divine assistance, distribute abundant favors, and proportionate them in accordance with the wants of the Church and the great works which God requires of her? Was there ever a time when these wants were greater? See, most dearly beloved brethren, see all those Prelates from all parts of the world proceeding towards the Holy City. Whence comes that holy eagerness which causes them to interrupt their labors, the care of their dioceses, and to forget their age and their infirmities? Ah! it is the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff that has been heard by them. It has been his will to summon them, to call for their help, their wisdom, and their advice, in the august moment chosen by him for pronouncing a supreme decision; and all, as docile children, have been eager to obey him. They carry with them the ancient traditions of all their churches, and the faith of the whole world. With one voice all will say to the Pontiff:—

“The Catholic World, oh! Supreme Pontiff, begs that your voice proclaim, as an article of Faith, the privilege of the Immaculate “Conception of Mary.”

Already, most dearly beloved brethren, for many centuries, Rome has been constantly urged to proclaim that truth; but admire the wisdom of our Church, the Mother of all other Churches. Whilst the Governments of this world see their

laws multiplied with amazing rapidity, that Church before she enacts a single one, elaborates it during centuries. She knows that time is spread before her, and that her laws when once promulgated, have the immutability of truth, or rather that of God Himself, from whom they emanate. Therefore, even now, although after most serious examination, most profound studies have caused the beautiful and touching privilege of Mary to beam with all the resplendency of truth; yet we see the Sovereign Pontiff seeking universal prayer to give light to Him and the Pastors of the Church, who will shortly surround His throne. And that such a prayer may ascend towards God with more fervor and purity, all the Catholic Pulpits are now repeating in His name, that a grace extraordinary, in the form of a Jubilee, has been granted to all souls well prepared.

Another object has awakened the solicitude of His Holiness, and has pressed him to grant such a grace, it is the evils that afflict humanity, and the hard trials to which the Church is exposed. We see war moving nations against nations,—we see poverty and want cruelly raging throughout Europe,—we see the world terrified by destructive scourges and plagues, which neither the boundaries of Empires, the vastness of Seas, nor the most extended Deserts could stay,—the sad sight of all these woes has keenly afflicted the heart of Pope Pius, IX.; but He has viewed with a yet deeper grief the reiterated attacks of the enemies of the Church, the secret societies threatening the peace of the world. He sees the Catholic Faithful scattered in countries but lately opening to colonization, deprived of all religious aid, exposed to the snares and seductions of error. How is He to guard against all these evils? How provide for these immense wants? He has neither the craft, the commerce, nor the power of the great of this world, the wealth nor the books heretics possess for propagating their errors, but He has a resource, a weapon to which victory is pledged, a power above all human might; that resource, that weapon, that power is prayer. This is the reason why the Sovereign Pontiff, amidst all these pressing wants, has lifted up his eyes and his hands towards Heaven, and has said to the Faithful: ‘Let us pray all united;—let us beg of our Lord His help,—let us stay His wrath.’ He spoke, and, with one accord, the solitary prays in his deserts, the Virgin consecrated to God prays within the precincts of those walls which conceal her from the world, the Priest, the Religious, and the Missionary pray; the Faithful suspend their occupations and pray. From all quarters of the globe prayer ascends.

Oh! most dearly beloved Brethren, let us also pray. Let us strike our breasts,—let us forsake sin,—let the invocation of the common Father of all Faithful find in us but docile hearts. Let us hope with confidence that the scourges and plagues will soon disappear from the face of the earth, that peace will be established among nations, and that the Catholic world will soon fondly repeat:—“Rome has spoken; the cause is decided; Mary, the Holy Virgin, is truly immaculate in her Conception.”

In obedience to the call of the Sovereign Pontiff, we have ordered and decreed, and we do order and decree as follows:

1st. The Jubilee will commence for the whole Diocese of Bytown, on the first of December next and will terminate on the last day of February following.

2nd. On Sundays, and Festivals of Obligation, after High Mass, or the Principal Mass, the Celebrant, kneeling at the foot of the altar, shall recite the Litanies of the Blessed Virgin.

3rd. At all Masses will be recited the oration *Deus Refugium*, &c.

4th. To gain the Indulgence four conditions are requisite, and they must be complied with within the three months above mentioned, viz.:

To make a good confession, and a good communion, to fast once, to give alms to the poor, and to visit three times the Church or Chapel appointed by the Priest of each locality, reciting at each visit five *Paters and Aves* in the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.

As to persons residing at long distance from Chapels, prisoners, invalids, children, poor, and others legitimately hindered from performing these conditions, their confessors may commute them for other good works.

5th. Confessors will enjoy, in the tribunal of penance, all and every power usually granted to them for a time of a Jubilee.

The present Pastoral Letter shall be read in all the Churches of our Diocese, the first Sunday after its reception.

Given at Bytown, under our hand and seal, and countersigned by our Secretary,
on the first of November, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

† JOSEPH EUGENIUS, *Bishop of Bytown.*

By command,

D. DANDURAND, Priest, O. M. I., *Secretary.*